

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO
EASTERN DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

JOEL M. MEFFORD,

Defendant.

CASE NO. 2:23-cr-242

Judge Edmund A. Sargus, Jr.

PRELIMINARY ORDER OF FORFEITURE

Upon the United States' Motion for Preliminary Order of Forfeiture and the Court's review of the evidence in the record, including the Plea Agreement, the Court HEREBY FINDS THAT:

On December 19, 2023, a grand jury in the Southern District of Ohio returned a four-count Indictment charging Defendant Joel M. Mefford in Count 1 with Possession with Intent to Distribute 500 Grams or More of Cocaine, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1) and (b)(1)(B)(ii); in Count 2 with Possession with Intent to Distribute 500 Grams or More of Cocaine, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1) and (b)(1)(B)(ii); in Count 3 with Possession with Intent to Distribute 5 Kilograms or More of Cocaine, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1) and (b)(1)(A)(ii); and in Count 4 with Money Laundering, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1957. (Doc. 4.)

Forfeiture allegations in the Indictment provided notice to the Defendant that the United States would seek the forfeiture, pursuant to 21 U.S.C. § 853(a)(1) and (2), of any property constituting, or derived from, any proceeds obtained, directly or indirectly, as a result of the violations alleged in Counts 1 through 3 of the Indictment; and any property used, or intended to be used, in any manner or part, to commit, or to facilitate the commission of, such violations; and/or pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 982(a)(1), of any property, real or personal, involved in the offense

alleged in Count 4 of the Indictment, and any property traceable to such property. (*Id.*)

The Defendant entered into a Plea Agreement with the United States in which he agreed to plead guilty to Counts 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the Indictment and agreed to the entry of a forfeiture money judgment in the amount of \$130,000.00. (Doc. 28.) The Defendant admitted that the amount of \$130,000.00 represents a conservative estimate of the proceeds he personally obtained as a result of the violations alleged in Counts 1, 2, and 3 of the Indictment; and/or was property involved in the offense alleged in Count 4 of the Indictment, and/or is property traceable to such property. (*Id.*) The Defendant pleaded guilty to Counts 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the Indictment on August 27, 2024. (Doc. 30.)

Pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 32.2(b)(1), the Court finds that the Defendant obtained proceeds in the amount of \$130,000.00 as a result of the violations alleged in Counts 1, 2, and 3 of the Indictment; and/or the \$130,000.00 represents property involved in the offense alleged in Count 4 of the Indictment, and/or is property traceable to such property.

THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. A money judgment forfeiture in the amount of \$130,000.00 is entered against the Defendant pursuant to 21 U. S.C. § 853(a) and 18 U.S.C. § 982(a)(1).
2. Pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 32.2(b)(4), the Preliminary Order of Forfeiture shall become final as to the Defendant at sentencing and shall be made part of the sentence and included in the judgment.

3. The Court shall retain jurisdiction to enforce this Order and to amend it as necessary pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 32.2(e).

IT IS SO ORDERED.

HONORABLE EDMUND A. SARGUS, JR.
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE